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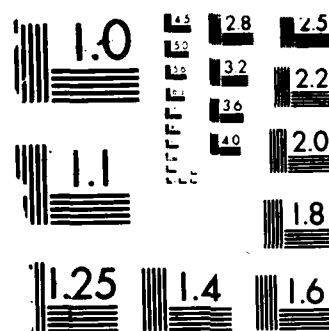   PA J C RILEY 23 MAR 87

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COMMAND AND CONTROL:
OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVES FOR THE AIRLAND BATTLEFIELD

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES C. RILEY

23 MARCH 1987

US ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA

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Since the earliest wars, command and control have been an essential battlefield ingredient. Several contemporary command systems (The German Mission Oriented Command and Control, the Israeli Optional Control, the Soviet Scientific Control, and the basis for US command and control doctrine as outlined in FM 100-5, Operations) provide a background for discussing command and control problems encountered by the US, British, and German Armies in North Africa during WWII and by the Israelis and the Egyptians in the Sinai during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. A review of these campaigns and an assessment of current (over)

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

COMMAND AND CONTROL:
Operational Perspectives for the AirLand Battlefield

An Individual Essay

by

Lieutanant Colonel James C. Riley (Author)

Colonel Harold W. Nelson, FA
Project Adviser

US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: James C. Riley, LTC, IN

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COMMAND AND CONTROL:
Operational Perspectives for the AirLand Battlefield

Command and control is the exercise of authority
and direction by a commander over assigned forces
in the accomplishment of the mission. (JCS Pub 1)

Common to all operations--close, deep, and
rear--is the necessity for superior command and
control. (FM 100-5)

With the evolution of AirLand Battle doctrine

has come the visualizaton of a battlefield

characterized by initiative, agility, depth and

synchronization. There has been renewed interest

in what has been termed the operational level of

war: the planning and execution of campaigns and

major operations to attain strategic goals. And

we now anticipate a requirement to fight close,

deep and rear operations simultaneously throughout

the depth of the battlefield.

Wide ranging questions arise concerning how

such operations can most effectively be controlled

and a number of different "command systems" are

currently in use. Four are briefly described below. They have similarities and they have differences but they all aim at producing some sort of ordered outcome from the chaos of war:

THE GERMAN SYSTEM: Mission Oriented Command and Control. The current version of auftragstaktik is described as a command and control procedure whereby the subordinate is given extensive latitude, within the framework of the intention of the individual giving the order. The missions are to include only those restraints which are indispensable for being able to interact with others, and it must be possible to accomplish them by making use of the subordinate's forces, resources, and the authority delegated to him. Mission-oriented command and control requires uniformity in the way of thinking, sound judgement and initiative at all levels.[1]

THE ISRAELI SYSTEM: Optional Control. The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) believes that a proper command system should establish the mission, work to accomplish it with a clear understanding that things will always go wrong, and that when they do

go wrong the system will be able to overcome whatever obstacles arise. When given a choice of either planning everything in advance and then executing, or laying down general objectives and executing immediately, filling in details as progress is made, the Israelis usually choose the latter.2 Optional Control is based on the assumption that the fluid setting of the modern maneuver battlefield moves so rapidly that tactical intelligence becomes obsolete very quickly and that opportunities are fleeting, dangers are sudden, command decisions must be prompt and there is no room for a centralized structure. Subordinate commanders are given a mission, very few constraints and the power of immediate decision without consultation with higher headquarters. Great stress, however is placed on situation reporting and a mechanism known as a "telescope" (an informal communications system operated by representatives from higher headquarters who follow and report on the activities of subordinate units) is often used to ease the burden on subordinate commanders and to enable higher commanders to follow the battle and

make informed decisions concerning when to
exercise their right of "optional control." The
main advantage of optional control is that the fog
of war is not only taken into account but actually
treated as a protagonist of the battle. Officers
are taught that neat battle plans will invariably
break down, that the enemy will behave
unpredictably and that their job is to impose
their will on the confusion of the battle.3
Innovation during execution, discipline, and
improvisation are the three basic elements that
make up the IDF command system.

THE SOVIET SYSTEM: Scientific Command. While
Soviet leaders have recognized that inertia can
result from a rigid, highly centralized command
system, they continue to believe that war is
governed by specific rules (norms) with regard to
frontages, depths, weapons densities, relative
force ratios, time-tables, etc. This scientific
approach to the nature of combat has led to the
development of "school solutions" for most combat
situations. In other words, war is governed by
laws expressing its unique nature, and military

success results from proper application of these laws. Violation of these laws leads to failure.4 This notion is coupled to three others that are equally fundamental to Soviet command and control doctrine: First is the principle of one-man command which says that the commander is solely and personally responsible for accomplishment of his mission. Next is the concept of centralization of control which means that the commander unites the actions of subordinate units under a detailed, centralized plan that describes not only what to do but, in many cases. the specific methods for carrying out these missions.5 And finally, there is a demand for strict adherence to regulations and precise execution of orders. In the Soviet Army, regulations are much more than just a guide. The Soviet command system therefore, uses a rational, highly structured and centralized approach to planning and executing combat operations. Initiative is encouraged only in the sense that it relates to determination and perseverance, not imagination and creativity.

THE U.S. ARMY SYSTEM: General Donn Starry has said that the commander has to find out what is

going on, decide what to do about it, tell
somebody what to do, keep track of how the battle
is going and that he needs to do the entire cycle
consistently quicker than his enemy.

The command and control system which supports
the execution of AirLand Battle doctrine is one
that facilitates freedom to operate, delegation of
authority, and personal leadership from critical
points on the battlefield. Ideally, initial plans
establish the commander's intent and concept of
operations...they will however, leave the greatest
possible freedom to subordinate leaders. Plans
must therefore be flexible enough to permit
variation by subordinates in pursuit of the
commander's goals. Subordinate leaders should
receive their orders face-to-face from their
commanders on the ground chosen for the operation
and commanders should restrict the operations of
their subordinates as little as necssary. Mission
orders that specify what must be done without
prescribing how it must be done will be used in
most cases.6 The U.S. system then borrows heavily
from the German Auftragtaktik and emphasizes
subordinate freedom of action much as the Israeli

system does. It does not, however, place the same specific emphasis on using innovation and improvisation to turn the fog of war into a protagonist of the battle. Where the senior Israeli commander assumes control only when necessary to make major changes, the U.S. and German commanders routinely retain general control over subordinate units. and the Soviet will keep tight control until the battle forces him to do otherwise.

With these brief descriptions provided as a background. the purpose of this paper is to examine systems used for the Command and Control of major operations or campaigns. Discussion will focus on structure (the organization for command and control). philisophy (centralization and decentralization), and the personal role of the commander himself. History, current doctrine and the implications of technology will be used to support several conclusions.

Two historical examples (U.S. operations in North Africa leading to the battles at Kasserine in 1943, and actions by the Israeli Southern

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Command in the Sinai in 1973) have been selected to draw lessons that might be as applicable to combat today or tomorrow as they were when they occurred.

While many historical reviews are presented as glowing examples, a different approach will be used here as the two selected for discussion are most notable for their avoidable problems:

NORTH AFRICA

In November 1942 a combined force of British and Americans, under the overall command of Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, invaded North Africa with the intent of defeating Field Marshal Kesselring's combined German and Italian armies which were then operating in Tunesia.

Although there were other Allied forces involved, this discussion will focus primarily on battles fought by the British 1st Corps, commanded by LTG Kan Anderson, and the II US Corps, commanded by MG Fredendall.
On the Axis side were Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, commander of the Afrika Korps Detachment and the Centauro Division, and Generaloberst

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Juergen von Arnim, commander of the Fifth Panzer
Army. Both were subordinate to the Italian chain
of command. Field Marshal Kesselring. who was the
senior German officer in Italy and North Africa,
maintained his headquarters in Rome and exercised
administrative control over all German troops in
the area. He therefore, acted as a de facto army
group commander and attempted to coordinate the
actions of Rommel and Arnim, yet was required to
obtain approval from the Italian high command
prior to issuing orders.

MG Fredendall commanded the II U.S. Corps during
the invasion at Oran. His units performed
superbly, seized their objectives in less than
three days, and were the only Allied units to win
a decision by force of arms during the invasion.
Fredendall, who remained in his command post
aboard ship throughout the invasion, gained a
reputation as a forceful commander.7 Upon moving
ashore Fredendall established his headquarters in
the Grand Hotel, the best in Oran, and established
"blouses and pinks" as the staff uniform.8

On 10 November the 1st British Corps began
their move from Algeria toward Tunesia and on 15

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November all French forces in NW Africa joined the Allies in their march against Axis forces.

The capitulation of the French resulted in a vague oral agreement between Eisenhower and the French General Giraud; all troops in northern Tunesia, mostly British, some French and a few Americans, would fight under British command; those in the south, mostly French, some Americans, and a few British would fight under the French. Eisenhower himself would exercise direct command of the combined forces fighting in Tunesia from his headquarters in Algeria, some 400 miles from the front.

As contact was made with the Germans in Tunisia on 17 November and Fredendall's II U.S. Corps was inserted into the command structure, it became obvious that the previous arrangements were inadequate. Eisenhower was faced with questions concerning who would command the British division now in II Corps' sector; to whom would the French General Juin, who would also be involved in the fight in northern Tunisia, report; and how would he execute timely and effective direction from Algeria. To establish closer supervision and to

give the senior French general on the northern front (Juin) a firmer position in the Alliied command structure, Eisenhower established a forward command post at Constantine (still 200 miles from the front) and dispatched MG Lucien Truscott, as his deputy chief of staff, to be his representative for operations in Tunisia. Highly competent but quite junior, Truscott was to "coordinate" the activities of the three national forces.9

During the period 25 December 1942 through 15 February 1943 Arnim and his Fifth Panzer Army executed a series of successful attacks to seize key passes (Pinchon, Fondouk, Faid, and Sidi bou Zid) that served to block and restrict movement by allied forces. During one of these battles, elements of the 1st U.S. Armored Division under MG Orlando Ward were soundly defeated while counterattacking at Sidi bou Zid. During another, the 1st Armored was forced to retire from Sbeitla in the face of pressure from Arnim's forces. Additionally, during the battle for Faid, Eisenhower ordered Fredendall to send a suitable force to help the French (Juin) to stabilize the

front. Instead of passing the order to MG Ward, Commander 1st Armored Division, Fredendall bypassed him and telephoned directly to BG Robinette, Commander, Combat Command B, 1st Armored Division. He detached Robinett from 1st Armored and told him to report to Corps Headquarters. During the week of combat that followed, Robinett was "unable to determine whether he was under the command of Eisenhower, Anderson, Fredendall, Truscott, or Juin, all of whom made their presence, weight and superior rank felt."10 The 1st Armored Division's lack of success and the Corps commander's obvious lack of confidence in MG Ward was to have a significant impact on command and control procedures during future battles.

By 17 February Rommel had moved to Arnim's flank and attempted to gain his support for a cooperative envelopment that would have potential for throwing allied forces entirely out of Tunisia. At 1430 hours 18 February Rommel, having received no cooperation from Arnim (who has been described as surly, ambitious and uncooperative), sent the following message to Kesselring in Rome:

"On the basis of the enemy situation today, I propose an immediate enveloping thrust from the southwest on Tebessa and the area to the north of it, provided the Fifth Panzer Army's supply situation is adequate. This offensive must be executed with strong forces. I therefore request that 10th Panzer and 21st Panzer Divisions be assigned to me...immediately."[11] His objective was to make a wide sweep around the Allied flank toward a town called Bone in order to encircle Allied reserves, disrupt lines of communications and ultimately to force the Allies out of Tunesia. During the afternoon Kesselring phoned Rommel to say that he liked his proposal and would take it directly to the Italian high command. Nine hours after his request, Rommel got what he thought was an ambiguous response, approving the additional two divisions and directing a "decisive attack" through Kasserine to Le Kef, seventy miles to the north, while Arnim executed a holding attack. To Rommel this was a very limited objective attack, which rejected his notion of a wide encirclement deep into Allied territory, and held no potential for encircling Allied reserves

or cutting their lines of communication--essential preconditions for success. The Italian high command appeared to favor a quick tactical gain over the possibility of a major operational victory.

Disgruntled, Rommel launched the attack as directed by the Italian high command. Kesselring, however, continued to believe that Rommel would execute the wide circling movement they had discussed, and it was not until the attack was well underway that he learned that the wording of the message had failed to make his intent clear.12

Fredendall, at this time was occupying a command post 60-70 miles from the front, far up a canyon, with underground shelters. It is reported that it required 200 engineers nearly three weeks to construct it and that Fredendall rarely left his C.P.. Nevertheless, Fredendall essentially took command of the 1st Armored Division, located in Kasserine Pass. His instructions to Ward were very detailed/restrictive and his meticulous placement of Ward's units froze the defense; there was no way to react quickly. When the Germans atacked, Fredendall said "hold-tight".13

Rommel attacked from 19 through 22 February
and, as the attack gathered momentum, it became
apparent to Eisenhower that his command structure
had grown shakey. In order to facilitate quicker
reaction, Eisenhower appointed Anderson his
"advisor" for the entire Tunisian front.

During the battle Fredendall routinely
bypassed Ward and gave orders directly to Robinett
and BG Stark, another of the commanders in 1st
Armored Division. II Corps Headquarters moved
mid-battle while Fredendall was gone and control
was lost completely. BG Robinett, who visited the
Corps CP during the battle complained that no one
coordinated the battle, no one knew the
boundaries, no one knew who was on the flanks,
there was no fire coordination and the piecemeal
commitment of small units caused untold confusion.
On 20 February, by the time Fredendall understood
what was happening, 1st Armored had been defeated
at Kasserine.

Additional confusion existed concerning who
was in command at Kasserine on 20 February:
Anderson (Eisenhower's "advisor") told Fredendall
that he was in command of the forces in the pass;

Fredendall passed command to Robinett; Robinett

issued orders to subordinate commanders and was

not aware that Anderson had also sent Brigadier

Nicholson (ADC 6th British Armored Division), with

additional troops to take control of all British,

American and French forces in the battle.14

During Rommel's attack, continued problems

arose as a result of Arnim's failure to cooperate.

Kesselring, at this point, decided that he could

best insure cooperation by placing command of both

armies under Rommel. Rommel declined and

Kesselring delayed the appointment until 23

February; too late to salvage the operational

success of Rommel's attack.

On 21 February the commands of Robinett and

Dunphie put up stiff resistance and halted

Rommel's attack. Reinforcements arrived and the

defense continued to strengthen.

On 23 February MG Ernie Harmon, sent by

Eisenhower to help with command and control,

arrived at II Corps Hqs. to find a harrassed,

worried and fearful atmosphere. When

Fredendall, who was exhausted, learned that Harmon

had not come to relieve Ward, he gave him command

of the battle. Harmon went to the front, found things begining to stabilize and made sure that Ward knew that he still had command of his Division. He then colocated his C.P. with the 1st Armored Division's and began to reestablish order. At about this same time Rommel, who realized that the Allies were getting stronger by the day, broke off his attack and began to withdraw. By 25 February the Allies had counterattacked forward and reoccupied Kasserine.

The attack had been a limited tactical success for the Germans and a disaster for the Allies. II Corps alone had 300 killed, 3000 wounded and 3000 MIA out of 30,000 assigned. Equipment losses included 183 tanks, 194 half-tracks, 208 artillery pieces, 512 trucks, and more materiel and supplies than the stocks in the depots of Algeria and Morocco combined.

When Eisenhower asked Harmon for his assessment of Ward and Fredendall, he replied that he found Ward "ok" but Fredendall lacking. Fredendall was removed from command and, when Harmon refused the opportunity to replace him

(preferring to return to command of his division),
G.S. Patton Jr. was given command of II Corps.

A review of this brief description of the
events leading to the battles of Kasserine reveals
several command and control issues that
contributed to problems on both sides:

*Philosophy: It is not entirely clear
whether the Allies embraced a centralized or
decentralized command philosophy. Fredendall, for
his part, was inconsistent. Because of his
dislike or distrust of Ward, he either bypassed
him or gave him such restrictive orders that
initiative was out of the question. When giving
instructions to the Air Force however, he said
"Don't wait for us to order air missions. You
know what the situation is, just keep pounding
them." With Ward he withdrew the latitude
necessary to fight the battle. With the Air Force
he abdicated his responsibility to assign specific
missions, denying the Air Force the ability to be
responsive to the ground commanders' needs. The
Axis forces clearly operated with a decentralized
system: Rommel, as always, took initiative,

suggested plans upward, and broke off his attack when he knew it was time to do so. Arnim complied selectively with instructions from higher headquarters, and Kesselring issued concise, mission orders (even if they were not fully understood) to his subordinates.

*Command structure. Both the Allies and Axis leaders wrestled with questions of how to organize for command of major formations. Eisenhower found three different arrangements unsatisfactory and, to his credit, attempted to make adjustments. When he realized that he was too far from the troops (400 miles) to allow for timely decisions, he sent Truscott to Constantine (still 200 miles) to coordinate the battle. When he realized that "coordination" was not the same as command, he appointed Anderson as his "advisor". And finally, he sent Harmon to sort things out at II Corps. Unfortunately, he never moved his own headquarters to the front, nor did he ever appoint a single ground commander who was located close enough to the battle to make timely decisions. "Coordinators", "advisors", and "helpers" are NOT commanders. At the height of the

battle for Kasserine, Allied command and control
was hopelessly confused. On the Axis side,
Kesselring realized too late that he desperately
needed a single commander, close enough to the
front to exercise timely and effective control.
Had he appointed Rommel as Army Group Commander
five days earlier, the force ratios, and perhaps
the outcome, would have been different.

* The personal role of the commander:
Probably the most significant lessons of this
battle come from an examination of what the senior
commanders did or failed to do personally. Field
Marshal Montgomery outlined six responsibilities
of the high level commander in the field: 1)
Establish the proper atmosphere; Visitors to II
Corps Hqs consistently commented that the
atmosphere there was either stiff and rigid, or
worried and confused, and was always more
concerned with security than with fighting. 2)
Choose subordinate commanders carefully (in war it
is the man that matters); Fredendall's
relationship with Ward is an example of the
consequences of not having complete trust and
confidence between commanders. 3) The commander

must keep himself mentally fresh and avoid
becoming immersed in details and he must 4)
decentralize. State the mission clearly then
trust subordinates and leave them alone to get on
with their own jobs; Fredendall became exhausted,
was excessively involved in the details of Ward's
defense, and found himself unable to decentralize.
5) Command by direct and personal involvement.
Visit subordinate Hqs and issue orders verbally
(eyeball to eyeball). Additional personal
involvement (visits to subordinate Hqs and verbal
orders) by Eisenhower, Fredendall, and Kesselring
would have resolved most of the serious command
and control problems encountered by both sides.
6) Establish a system of liaison officers from
higher Hqs to lower. Their responsibility is to
paint for the senior commander a vivid and
accurate picture of what's going on every day
(very similar to the Israeli "directed
telescope"). Such a system would certainly have
helped key commanders to learn what was actually
going on and could have decreased the fog of war
that crippled Allied forces at Kasserine.

SINAI 1973

A study of the Sinai portion of the 1973
Arab-Israeli War reveals a classic example of two
modern, well equipped and well trained military
forces; one using a highly centralized, Soviet
style of command while the other used an extremely
decentralized command system. While the Egyptians
planned to retain control in Cairo, the Israeli's,
fighting a war in two separate theaters, intended
to allow theater commanders to control operations
in accordance with strategic guidance provided by
Tel Aviv.

Throughout 1973, tensions intensified between
the Israelis and their Arab neighbors. The Arabs
had lost interest in the "War of Attrition" due to
the Israeli practice of massive retaliation and,
with the help of the Soviet Union, had rebuilt the
military capabilities that had been devastated in
the June 1967 war. Egypt and Syria received
substantial numbers of T62 tanks, SAM 6 and 7 AA
missiles, ZSU 23-4's, RPG-7, SAGGER and SWATTER AT
missiles, and bridges from their Soviet suppliers.
Preparations were made for an October war aimed at
recovering territory (the Sinai, the Golan

Heights, the West Bank of the Jordan River and the Gaza Strip) which had been lost to Israel in previous conflicts.

The Israelis were aware of much of the modernization that had taken place within the Arab armies but they failed in their assessment of Egyptian intentions and did not believe the Egyptians would attack across the Suez Canal. In fact, they were so secure in their belief that war was not imminent that the last three months of peace saw massive changes in the Israeli command structure: General Elazar was appointed as Chief of Staff, Israeli Defense Force (IDF); MG Sharon, who had been the Commander, Southern Command (Sinai), and aspired to be Chief of Staff, retired when he was not selected. He was replaced by MG Gonen, who had been one of his division commanders in Southern Command; Additionally, Commander, Central Command was replaced by the assistant chief of operations; and MG Adan, Chief of Armor was scheduled for retirement, to be replaced by MG Mandler, commander of armor forces in the Sinai (this last change did not take place due to the outbreak of war). These and other key personnel

changes constituted what was described as the most
sweeping reallocation of jobs the IDF had seen.16

At 1400 hours 6 October, 1973, the Israeli
Yom Kippur religious holiday, the Egyptians
initiated the war with massive artillery
preparation and a textbook deliberate assault
across the Suez Canal. The Israelis were
unprepared, only partially mobilized, and stunned
by the sudden effectiveness of the Egyptian
attack.

During the rapid Israeli mobilization,
soldiers of all types came from the reserves and
retirement to insert themselves into the command
structure. Gonen, commanding the Southern Front,
had the disadvantage of being junior to two of his
division commanders; Adan, who he had worked for
several times, came from his job as Chief of Armor
to command a division; and Sharon, who he had
replaced as Commander, Southern Command, barely
three months before, came to command his (Gonen's)
old division.

Gonen was described by Adan as "brave, a
master of his profession, but one who created for
himself a showy image and was a very strict

disciplinarian. One who imposed punishments on impulse yet was soft spoken with superiors...a "bicycle rider", one who presses hard downward but is always looking upwards. Gonen's method seemed to aim at breaking the personality of his staff officers."17

This was a style that was slightly out of step with the Israeli system of command and one that probably did not sit well with his two very senior subordinates.

By midnight on the 6th of October the Egyptians had crossed the canal with 500 tanks and a full complement of Air Defense weapons. The Israelis, meanwhile, were desperately trying to mobilize. Gonen, at this point, was attempting to control the situation from his peacetime headquarters in Beersheba, about 150 miles from the front. His assessment of the situation on the front on the night of 6 October was so highly inaccurate that he attempted to maneuver about the battlefield several units that were decisively engaged and had losses up to sixty percent. At about midnight Gonen called Elazar, the Chief of Staff, to ask for authority to attack and seize an

Egyptian strongpoint. In what was the beginning
of a weakening relatioinship between the Chief of
Staff and Gonen, Elazar told him that approval
should be the least of his worries and that he
should be concentrating on stopping the Egyptian
crossings. At about 0200 Gonen relocated, by
helicopter, to his forward command post in the
Sinai.18

On 7 October the attack continued and by
evening the Egyptians had 600 tanks and the bulk
of six infantry divisions across. AT and ADA
missiles had taken a heavy toll of Israeli
defenders and aircraft. Moishe Dayan, Israeli
Defense Minister, visited Gonen on the 7th and
advised him to abandon the fortifications of the
Bar Lev line, along the canal, and to withdraw to
the high ground about 30 miles east of the canal.
Gonen agreed about the fortifications but wanted
to stay forward on the artillery road, about 15
miles from the canal. Dayan left the decision
with Gonen remarking that anything he said was to
be taken as "ministerial advice". Israeli
military action throughout the 7th can be best
described as a series of small, piecemeal

counterattacks that had little effect, but cost both lives and equipment.

The Egyptians had estimated that the canal crossing could cost as many as 2,000 casualties and yet they had lost only two hundred men. So successful was their attack that they could easily have exploited much deeper into the Sinai. Their military objectives, however, were limited (hoping to defend their limited gains and wait for superpower intervention to end the war on terms that would lead to a negotiated return of their lost territories), and they had neither the inclination nor the flexibility to break from their rigid, centralized command structure to press the attack.

On the evening of 7 October Elazar came to Southern Command Hqs and held a long meeting with the front and division commanders. By 2200 hours all had agreed that, on 8 October, Southern Command would attack to destroy Egyptian forces that had crossed the canal but that the offensive would not include an attempt to attack across the canal into Egypt. At midnight, Elazar briefed GHQ on the plan and at 0200 Gonen's written plan was

finalized. It was a 'frag" order that differed
substantially from what had been agreed upon and,
in fact, outlined a course of action that had been
considered and rejected. To further confuse the
issue, copies of this order never reached the
division commanders--Adan, Sharon and Mandler all
had one understanding, Gonen had an entirely
different one. As the Israeli attack got
underway, there were misunderstandings as to
intent throughout the IDF hierarchy. There was no
common language between GHQ and Southern Command
and none between Southern Command and the
divisions. It was a chaotic day! Adan's mounted
attack against the Egyptian 3d Army was destroyed
by the defending infantry equipped with SAGGER
missiles.19

On 9 October Sharon launched an attack,
despite orders from Gonen to not attack but
simply to maintain contact while Southern Command
continued to gain strength from the mobilization.
Sharon's attack failed and Gonen formally
requested Elazar to strip Sharon of his command
for disobedience.

Martin van Crefeld conjectures that, at this point, Elazar's lack of trust in Gonen caused him to impose "reverse optional control". "Instead of giving subordinates a free rein and intervening only in case of need, his distrust of Gonen led him to reserve approval of the most important moves to himself. Gonen, in turn, was thereby compelled to restrict Adan and Sharon in a similar way, and right on down the line." Elazar also lacked any kind of "directed telescope" to provide the kind of timely information needed for decision making.20 One of Gonen's subordinate commanders later commented that the dispute between Gonen, Sharon and Adan over what should be done tactically between 7 and 10 October caused confusion and indecision throughout the ranks and led to the army's inability to accomplish the mission. The entire command structure was disrupted and the normal, decentralized way of doing business in the IDF was subverted.

Because Dayan and Elazar agreed that Sharon's relief would not be politically acceptable, on 10 October, MG Bar Lev was dispatched to the Southern command as Elazar's representative (to make peace

with the fueding generals) with approval authority

over Gonen's plans. This, obviously gave Bar Lev

command authority over the Southern front and,

upon arrival, he set about establishing order in

the overcrowded war room, in the decision making

process, and in the tactical situation. He also

initiated daily visits to the divisions and

nightly meetings with the division commanders.

During the period 10 through 13 October the

Israelis and the Egyptians each conducted a

tactical defense; the Israelis to build their

strength and the Egyptians to consolidate their

gains. Bar Lev's visits to the front on 11

October were the first visits, by senior officers

in Southern Command, that the divisions had

received. All was not peaceful, however, among

the unruly generals. At about this time Sharon

pushed for a rapid attack aimed at crossing the

canal into Egypt. Bar Lev disagreed, saying that

the timing was not right yet, and the conflict

grew to such proportions that this time it was Bar

Lev who recommended to Dayan and Elazar that

Sharon be removed from commard. For the same

reasons that led to rejection of Gonen's similar

request, the recommendation was turned down.21

Also on 10 October Shazli, the Egyptian Army

Chief of Staff, was urging Ismael, War Minister

and Commander in Chief, to continue the attack and

exploit their successes. Ismael refused, leading

to a confrontation that required Sadat to

intervene and make the final decision. He sided

with Ismael and Shazli resigned. During the war

Ismael said that "rigidity is better than

looseness, especially in matters of war." Mobile

warfare, however, demands a level of initiative

among junior officers, a level of confidence among

senior ones and a willingness of both to

communicate; attributes that the Egyptians simply

had not developed.

Planning was underway, by this time, for a 14

October Israeli attack, led by Sharon with Adan

following, to split the two Egyptian armies,

penetrate to the canal, and then cross into Egypt

to cut lines of communication and force withdrawal

of Egyptian forces. The plan was approved and the

date was set for 14 October.

On 14 October, however, the Egyptians, responding to requests from the Syrians, who were having great difficulties on the northern front, launched six major attacks against Israeli forces. Because the Egyptians had attacked out from under their air defense coverage, the Israeli Air Force, for the first time, played a major role. Egyptian commanders in this attack were given little freedom of action and were ill prepared for combat in a free flowing maneuver environment. By nightfall the Israeli tactical defense and air power had defeated each of the attacks and the Egyptians were forced to pull back. The Israeli attack was delayed until the next day.

On 15 October Southern Command initiated its attack with Sharon splitting the boundary between the Egyptian 2d and 3rd Armies, Adan following to secure lines of communication, and the third division conducting a diversionary attack against the southern flank of 3rd Army. Throughout the 15th, Sharon continued his attack while the Egyptians remained focused on the diversionary attack.

On 16 October Israeli paratroopers secured
the west bank and Sharon moved a forward CP and
two tank battalions across. Because heavy
fighting with Egyptian infantry along the lines of
communication threatened movement to the crossing
site, Gonen ordered Adan to secure the LOC and
reduce the resistance. Sharon objected, saying
they should ignore the Egyptians and continue
moving across. Gonen and Bar Lev rejected
Sharon's suggestion and Israeli paratroopers
attacked to reduce stubborn Egyptian resistance.

On 17 October Sharon began building a bridge
across the canal and the Egyptian 2d Army, which
had, by now, assessed the seriousness of the
Israeli attack, responded by ordering the 25th
Tank Brigade to attack to close the corridor from
the north. Adan detected the movement of the 25th
Brigade, ambushed and destroyed this and several
other small, piecemeal Egyptian counterattacks in
detail. It appears that the highly centralized
Egyptian command structure was unable to
coordinate and launch attacks from each side of
the Israeli corridor. By 1800 hours Adan had
begun crossing the canal into Egypt.

During the period 18 through 23 October the
Israelis, with two divisions across the canal,
attacked to destroy Egyptian air defense batteries
and then moved to encircle the Egyptian 3rd Army.
As Israel crossed the canal Egypt did not
recognize the objective early enough to initiate a
coherent tactical defense and Sadat, in Cairo, did
not know of the crossing until Golda Maier
announced it on the radio.

Once the Egyptian high command correctly
assessed the seriousness of the Israeli
penetration. they rejected withdrawing to the west
to deal with it and issued instructions that the
2d and 3rd Armies must handle the threat without
removing one soldier from the east bank.

On 21 October an additional serious rift
developed between Sharon and Gonen/Bar Lev: When
it appeared that Sharon was dragging his feet
during an attack that had been directed on an
objective known as "Missouri". Gonen tried to
reach him several times. Each time he was told
that Sharon was either busy or asleep. When he
finally was reached, both Gonen and Bar Lev
ordered Sharon to reinforce the attack

sufficiently to seize the objective. Sharon
objected and, at midnight, jumped two echelons of
his chain of command (Gonen and Elazar), called
directly to Dayan, the Minister of Defense, to
complain and request his intervention. Dayan,
sympathetic to Sharon, called Tal, the Deputy
Chief of Staff, and asked him to issue the orders
necessary to handle the matter saying "We can't
just ignore this kind of appeal from Sharon." Tal
called Gonen and had him fix the problem; by this
time, the attack on Missouri had resulted in a
bloody battle and over one-third of the objective
had been taken. During this incident the chain-
of-command never played in the decision process:
Sharon bypassed Bar Lev and Elazar; Dayan avoided
Elazar; and Tal avoided Bar Lev.22

By 23 October the Egyptian 3rd Army was
virtually encircled, Adan was 100 km from Cairo,
and the Israeli lines of communication were open.

While the war may have been a strategic
success for the Egyptians, the military outcome
was more favorable for the Israelis. Egyptian
losses were: 222 fighters; 42 helicopters; 1100
tanks; 450 APC's; 300 artillery pieces; 44 SAM

batteries; 5,000 KIA; 12,000 WIA; and 8,000 men
lost as prisoners.

For the Israelis the war was a harrowing,
traumatic experience. Even though they were
ultimately successful on the battlefield, their
military superiority was seriously challenged for
the first time. Equally costly, their losses
included (on both fronts): 103 fighters; 6
helicopters; 840 tanks; 400 APC's; 2,800 KIA;
8,800 WIA; and 508 lost as prisoners.

This short synopsis of events in the Sinai
during the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War holds a
number of command and control lessons worthy of
further discussion:

*Philosophy. During the 1956 Arab-
Israeli War, Sharon, who was a brigade commander,
attacked the Mitla Pass in violation of orders
from the IDF Chief of Staff, Dayan. Dayan took no
action because he saw this as a positive type of
indiscipline which resulted from exactly the high
morale and fighting spirit he had worked to
inspire. "Better to be engaged in restraining the
noble stallion than in prodding the reluctant

mule!" he said. Dayan frequently bypassed regular
chains of command and stressed leadership at the
expense of control. In the IDF in 1956, brigades
operated as independent forces under the loose
control of division headquarters. Brigade
commanders did not follow detailed plans prepared
in advance and were not subjected to a continuous
flow of orders from above. They were given
general mission guidance and were free to make
their own tactical decisions. Despite the success
of the IDF under this system it was recognized
that a greater degree of control would be
necessary in order to create or exploit
operational opportunities when operating against a
modern, well-trained enemy. It was a number of
years before this very decentralized command
system was balanced by additional control measures
and evolved into what has previously been
described as "optional control." This system was
developed under Hiam Laskov, Dayan's successor as
Chief of Staff in 1958. Optional control requires
self-reliant officers who are willing and able to
shoulder responsibility without waiting for orders
from their seniors, but includes division as well

as front headquarters in the command process, and uses the directed telescope to facilitate the assumption of control when required.23 Dayan's desire for aggressive, spirited subordinate commanders is universally accepted. Additionally, while his restraint in avoiding the temptation to dictate his solutions to Gonen and Bar Lev is laudable, his tolerance for Sharon's disruptive and uncooperative behavior probably degraded the IDF's battlefield success and appears to be out of step with current Israeli command and control philosophy.

Most armies today use a hierarchical, two-way command system where commanders receive information from subordinate units, then make tactical decisions which are passed down through the chain-of-command until they reach the level of implementation. In the case of the Egyptian Army, the man making the decisions was the Minister of Defense and he was located in Cairo. If the nature of warfare is static or movement is limited to a few miles per day, commanders may have enough time to analyze data and make centralized decisions.24 The rapid pace of modern, mobile

warfare, however, requires not only decentralization of low to mid level decisions, but also reasonable proximity of the commander for whom high level or important decision authority has been reserved.

In the final analysis, despite its problems, the more aggressive and independent Israeli system of command and control proved itself superior to the Egyptian system which was unable to coordinate and maneuver its superior forces rapidly.

*Command Structure. The major structural issue on the Israeli side was--who is in charge? While, on paper, they had a well defined chain-of-command, in practice the structure was chaotic. Gonen, the newly assigned Southern Front Commander, had the misfortune to have two very aggressive, independent, former bosses in command of two of his divisions. It also appears that his domineering manner may have further aggravated the situation. Adan did not always agree with Gonen but it appears that he generally cooperated. Sharon, the former Southern Front Commander, on the other hand, clearly wanted to be in charge. Insertion of Bar Lev into the

command structure, while having some stabilizing influence, did not resolve the issue and Dayan's tolerance of Sharon's antics only further aggravated the situation. This confusion and indecision undoubtedly degraded the IDF's ability to accomplish its mission. The German system of mission oriented command and control requires "uniformity of thinking;" that is, a common approach to solving the problems of control and leadership on the battlefield. This ingredient was badly needed in the Southern Command in 1973.

The Egyptian Army's centralized structure was ideally suited to the set-piece nature of the deliberate canal crossing but broke down badly when decisions were required to respond to Israeli initiatives. Sadat and Ismael, who held the reins, were simply not current enough to coordinate the activities of their two armies in the field. A single front commander (with sufficient latitude and authority), controlling and coordinating the activities of both the 2d and 3rd Egyptian Armies, might have been able to defeat the IDF attack to establish a canal crossing.

*Personal Role of the Commander. Field
Marshal Erwin Rommel said "There are always
moments when the commander's place is not back
with his staff but up with the troops. It is
sheer nonsense to say that maintenance of the
men's morale is the job of the battalion
commander alone. The higher the rank, the greater
the effect of the example."

There is little evidence that Gonen was able
to break away from his headquarters during the
early days of the 1973 war and, in fact, Adan
states that his first outside visitor was Bar Lev
on 11 October; six full days into the war.

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli War General
Gavish said; "There is no substitute for looking
into a subordinates eyes, listening to his tone of
voice." Gavish was commander of the Sinai reserve
force of three divisions (roughly Corps size),
reporting directly to GHQ, during the 1967 war.
His practice was to spend his days forward,
visiting his subordinate headquarters while
leaving his chief of staff in command of the rear
headquarters. He took a radio network linking him
with the three division headquarters, and they

with each other, and a signal staff who monitored
divisional communications nets around the clock.
Messages were passed to and from GHQ (Tel Aviv) by
radio telephone circuit, and his rear CP
processed the results of Air recon. The point of
this synopsis is that, first Montgomery and
Rommel, and now Gavish, in a relatively modern and
highly lethal environment, have emphasized the
requirement for higher level commanders to be
forward and to interface directly with their
subordinates.

While technology and modern communications
create the impression that battles can be
"managed" from the CP, the commander's presence on
the battlefield is as valuable today as it was
when Napolean's presence was worth a Corps of men.

TECHNOLOGY

No paper on the subject of command and
control would be complete without some comment on
technology. One would think that proper
application of modern communications, data
processing and intelligence gathering equipment
would cause a dramatic reduction in the time

required to operate the information-decision cycle that Gen Starry talked about. It is true that modern technology is absolutely essential to the modern battlefield, and the result SHOULD be better and quicker decision making. It will not, however, suffice for the creation of a working command system, and it may, if a great deal of thought does not go into designing it into the command system, create much more serious problems than it has cured.25 Before discussing the potential that technology has, a few pitfalls:

* Technology creates the capability for increased centralization (Vietnam, Mayaguez, Cuban Missile Crisis, Pueblo, Desert I) and the temptation to centralize is often too much to avoid. For example, there is now the capability to install position location equipment on selected vehicles throughout the battlefield. This has tremendous potential for many practical applications from simple land navigation, to indirect fire control. Because this precise position location can be automatically transmitted to higher level commanders, it has the capability

to become a command and control tool (with the potential to develop a high-tech "directed telescope"). If the system that implements this capability is not properly designed we will present commanders with yet another temptation to centralize command and control. The corps commander who receives input on the specific locations of all battalions in the corps is likely to begin micro-managing his many battalions. He will subvert the initiative of his subordinate commanders, cause a tendency for them to wait to be told what to do (rather than actively executing along the lines of his intent) and he will soon be in violation of Montgomery's rule against becoming immersed in details.

* Man has gone through the entire history of war seeking more information on which to base his decisions. We have now come to the point however, where there is a very real danger of having too much information available. Current communications and data processing equipment have the potential for providing the commander (and the staff) with more information than can possibly be used. This increases the "signal to noise" ratio

dramatically and can cause substantial slowdowns as additional analysis time is required at every echelon. The challenge now is to filter through the "noise", identify that which is critical, and expedite its transmission to the appropriate decision maker. It is the commander's responsibility to refine, and clearly state, specifically what his information requirements zare. It is then essential that the command system include a carefully managed flow of critical and routine information--filtered, yet timely, and with mechanisms to insure key information gets to the right decision maker. As Clausewitz said--"a great part of the information obtained in war is contradictory, a still greater part is false, and by far the greatest part is uncertain."

*Technological advantages are usually temporary and can usually be defeated or bypassed entirely. Electronics equipment, years in development and procurement, is rarely on the leading edge of technology by the time it is fielded. Often, the equipment is subject to electronic countermeasures or has limitations that

can be exploited by an imaginative enemy. The
nature of the equipment itself is such that it is
frequently the "softest" or most fragile component
of the organization, requiring special handling,
climate control, skilled operators and unique
maintenance skills. Sometimes there is an
identifiable electronic signature and, once
located, communications and data processing
equipment is easily destroyed.

    *There is a tendency toward
over-reliance on new, high technology systems.
Once fielded there is pressure to show some
manpower savings resulting from all the
investment, and redundant, or backup human skills
are rarely retained. When equipment fails, or is
destroyed, there is no capability to perform the
function manually (much as when the computer "goes
down" at the airline terminal and everything from
ticket sales to seat selection comes to a halt).

    *The combination of modern
organizational complexity and information overload
can cause dramatic slowdown in information-
decision cycles. The pre-WW II German Army
division had fewer than 50 military specialties.

Todays German division has approximately 900 and

there has been similar growth in the U.S. Army.

Extreme specialization tends to cause the creation

of more and more headquarters (to manage the

specialties) and results in broader and deeper

organizations with wider spans of control and

more levels in the chain of command. The demand

for information is therefore greater, the number

of echelons at which it must be processed or

analysed is increased, and the whole process slows

significantly.26

Having said all that, modern technology has

the potential to absolutely revolutionize

warfighting. In order to avoid the pitfalls and

realize their full capabilities, technological

subsystems must be constructed within the overall

context of a coherent system of command and

control.

Information processing systems alone, if they

can avoid overload and focus on gathering,

analyzing and processing the right information,

can dramatically improve the capabilities of both

commanders and staffs.

If a technologically advanced command and control sub-system does not result in a more rapid information decision cycle, then its utility is limited. Simple sub-systems that serve the commander and focus, above all, on helping him make better and quicker decisions should be the goal.

CONCLUSIONS

The U.S. Army has taken the first step toward developing a command and control system to exploit the weaknesses of its principal adversary and complement its AirLand Battle doctrine. The foregoing discussion of various command systems, the Kasserine and Sinai campaigns and the implications of technology, however, has raised some issues that must be addressed if we are to have a truly comprehensive, effective and widely accepted doctrine for command and control

*Philosophy. On the modern battlefield, with armies that are capable of maneuvering great distances very rapidly, time takes on a greater importance than ever before. The need for rapid decision making strengthens the argument for a

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decentralized command system, where decision

thresholds are pushed as far down the

chain-of-command as possible. There are broad

implications for such an approach to command and

control: Trust, confidence and cohesion must be

high among commanders and within units; Leaders at

all levels must be action oriented, free, and even

expected, to exercise initiative (this type of

behavior should be specifically rewarded); Mission

orders, outlining minimum (rather than maximum)

objectives, and allowing subordinates significant

latitude, should be the norm; Commanders

themselves must routinely take the risk associated

with allowing subordinates significant latitude in

mission accomplishment (There is a real reluctance

to decentralize because, in the "zero-defects"

environment, the mistakes of a commander's

subordinates can make both the unit and the

commander look bad and are, therefore, career

threatening); and finally, commanders must, under

all but the most dire of circumstances, avoid

issuing orders directly to their subordinates'

subordinates. They must insure that their intent

is clearly understood by their direct

subordinates, and everyone in the chain-of-command must accept responsibility for knowing and pursuing the intent of commanders two levels above themselves.

FM 100-5 (Operations), and Field Circular 22-999 (Leadership and Command at Senior Levels) provide a basis for a command system that will meet the demands of the modern battlefield. The next requirement is to expand on these basic fundamentals in a single, comprehensive document and then to institutionalize the philosophy throughout the educational, training, and leadership structure.

*Structure. Among the most basic of military fundamentals is unity of command. The need for a single commander (not an advisor or a coordinator), who is near enough to the critical points on the battlefield to make and implement timely decisions (Not in Rome or Algeria when the fighting is in Tunesia) would seem to be obvious. Yet even Eisenhower and Kesselring of WW II and Dayan and Ismael (the Egyptian Defense Minister) in the Sinai all had difficulty in creating an effective structure to control the battlefield

activities of more than one major military

formation. The lesson here is that the command

structure must satisfy the basic requirement to

have someone in charge, and that whoever is in

charge must be capable of controlling his forces

with timely decisions.

Every command structure has a formal

communications system and an argument can be made

for decentralized command systems to include an

informal communications system as well.

Subordinate commanders and their headquarters

spend a significant amount of time preparing and

sending reports. As these reports are passed

through successive layers of the chain-of-command.

being analyzed and processed at each level, they

become very untimely and lose much of their value

(Analysis of situation reports received at a

division main CP during a recent Reforger exercise

revealed that information was six or more hours

old upon arrival). A number of very succesful

commanders (Among them. Patton. Moltke, Napoleon.

Gavish, Wellington and Montgomery) have used the

"directed telescope" to overcome what Starry

called the "tyranny of the message center." A

number of different forms have been used (from
simply monitoring subordinates' radio nets, to
sending liaison officers downward to visit
subordinate units daily, to actually stationing
officers inside subordinate unit CP's), but the
intent is to avoid becoming a prisoner of the
reporting system and to enhance both timeliness
and accuracy of information available to the
commander without imposing a substantial burden on
subordinate commanders. It is key to insure that
such a system does not intimidate subordinate
commanders (trust, confidence and cohesion are
more important), restrict their initiative or
create resentment toward the higher
headquarters.27 An unobtrusive system design and
a clear understanding of its purpose by
subordinates should avoid these problems.

Finally, the command and control structure
should make use of technology to facilitate the
flow of information and help the commander to make
better and faster decisions. A high-tech
"directed telescope" is certainly within the realm
of possibility today.

*Personal role of the commander. It
would be easy to assume that, with the
proliferation of radios, telephones and sattelite
communications on the battlefield today,
commanders no longer need to be near the front.
With all sources of operations and intelligence
information being centralized in a main CP, some
might say that the commander needs to be at the
CP, available to all the staff, and able to make
his decisions on the basis of their
recommendations. The truth of the matter is that
the commander can no more effectively command from
a main CP today than MG Fredendall could in North
Africa. or than Gonen could in Beersheba. or
Kesselring in Rome, or Eisenhower in Algeria. The
need for the senior commander to be at or near the
critical point on the battlefield, involved in
decisions (not leaving it all to his G3) and
personally issuing orders to his subordinates, is
no less important today than it ever has been.

This personal involvement by senior
commanders is key, not only on the battlefield,
but in the training environment as well. Too
often, in our peacetime army, the senior commander

is content to observe exercises and rarely is one seen actually participating. Once the senior commander has created the team and established the atmosphere he must participate in the training of his organization for combat, not as an "observer" but as a "player".

In order to effectively counter the operational doctrine of our principal adversary, deal with the speed and lethality of modern warfare, and fully support the requirements of our own vision of the AirLand Battlefield, the U.S. Army must have a comprehensive command system. Among the operational imperatives that should be included in such a system are the following:

(1) The basic foundation must be a decentralized leadership philosophy, using some centralized planning, mission orders, and subordinate leaders who understand their commander's intent. Trust, confidence and cohesion must be developed among leaders and within units and a "zero-defects" environment must not be allowed to exist. We will be unable to change our leadership/command philosophy when war

comes and it is, therefore, essential to build, every day, leaders who are bold, secure and will not hesitate to take action in the absence of orders. Administrative systems, personnel policies, and training methods that degrade cohesion in the name of "efficiency" must be energetically isolated and eliminated. Action oriented combat leaders who are professionally competent and willing to exercise initiative (take risk while pursuing their commander's intent) should be accelerated. Those who are more comfortable operating in a highly structured environment. waiting to be told what to do, and who do not tolerate honest tactical mistakes by action oriented subordinates, should be given duties commensurate with their limited contribution to the modern battlefield.

(2) It is essential that we have a simple structure with one man in charge (in a location that allows him to "see" the battlefield) and a formal as well as an informal communications system, thoughtfully enhanced by modern technology to help him make timely decisions. Our ability to gather and process information must be focused on

increasing the commander's ability to operate a
decision cycle that is consistently quicker than
the enemy's.

(3) Finally, our senior commanders should be
selected on the basis of their warfighting, not
their administrative skills. Senior commanders
must be personally involved in planning,
preparation and execution of battle plans, both in
training and in war. They must make timely,
informed decisions based on what they and their
subordinate commanders have personally
experienced.

"Training is everything and everything is
training" and key to the whole system is that, as
General Patton said, we must "practice those
things in peacetime that we intend to do in war."
The philosophy, the structure and the personal
involvement of senior commanders in preparing
major organizations for combat cannot simply be
implemented on the first day of the next war.
They must be used every day and the basic
philosophy must permeate everything we do.

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END

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